AN ANSWER

Sent to the

ECCLESIASTICALL ASSEMBLY AT

LONDON.

By the

Reverend, Noble, and Learned Man

JOHN DEODATE, the Famous

Professour of *Divinity*, and most vigilant Pastour of

GENEVAH.

Translated *out of the* Latine *into* English.

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72 DEODATE, John. Answer sent to the Ecclesiastical Assembly at London. *Genevah*, Printed for the Good of *Great Brittaine* 1646. Sm. 4to. *Sewed.* 4s

The Tranſlators Preface to the ſimple ſeduced READER.

Reader,

May the Father of lights *open thine Eyes to ſee* over this ſtrangers ſhoulders, *and by this impartiall* Perſpective, *what thou, whileſt kept down thus low by thy* new Maſters *and through thy* Seducers falſe Mediums, *haſt not hitherto been ſuffered to percieve, it being till now purpoſely hid from thine eyes: Behold* a meere ſtranger *that notwithſtanding his manifold* Obligations *and perſonall Ingagements* to a contrary Diſcipline in *the Church*, *and* different Forme of Government in *the State*, *yet, over-ruled by the Manifeſt* Truth and Honeſty of the *Kings* Cauſe, *breaks through all thoſe* Reſtraints *of his* Liberty *(as farr as he may) to tell thee thus much* plain English Truth, *Behold here* Geneva's veneration, *and full vindication too, of thine own Mother the Church of England as it ſtood under Epiſcopacy, traduced here at home by her own Spurious brood for Superſtitious, Popish, Antichriſtian, what not? And this Apology directed to the* Aſſembly-men *in anſwer to their Letter what ever it was. Behold here again* a cleare Iuſtification of the *King* vilified by his own for that, *for which Strangers do admire Him; His Clemency, His Inclinations to Peace; His Acts of Grace, &c. Behold here* the root of Gall, *that which hath brought forth all theſe Nationall Miſchiefes*, the Popular Tumults and Conſpiracies pointed at here, *as the onely evident cauſe* of the Kings Divorce from the Parliament. *See here by whom poore* Ireland *was deſerted: one*

thing alſo thou mayeſt here take notice of from theſe ſtanders by, *That the* Clergy *in their own* proper Sphere, *may be as* fit *and as* honeſt, *and perhaps, in ſome reſpects more* able, for the good ſpeed of a Treaty, *then thoſe that do ſleight them with* utter Præterition. *Laſt of all, behold here the Loyall and Religious* Subjects *onely* Militia, *or his own proper* Magazine, *to wit*, the knowne Laws of the Land, *that and* Prayer *and* Submiſſion *are the onely* defenſive weapons *allowed here by th's* Maſter of Fence. *I ſay no more to thee, ſave only, that I doe heartily pitty thee, and therefore I doe ſtill pray for thee and for all thy* Fellow bondmen, *that* God *will* bring into the way of Truth all ſuch as have erred and are deceived, Amen.

a See Dr. Deodats Notes on the Rom. and elſe-where.

Reverend, Godly, and worthy Sirs, our Deare Brethren and Companions in the Worke of the Lord.

IF proportionably to the griefe, we have conceived at your Letters (wherein you have expreſſed the moſt ſad face of your affaires) we had but as much ability either by our conſolations to aſſwage your Sorrowes, or by our Counſels to eaſe your Burthens, or by any our Co-operation to help your Extremity, we ſhould thinke our ſelves very happy in ſo well correſponding with your honourable, and moſt loving compellation of us; and right glad we ſhould be, thus to requite you with our beſt and effectuall

effectuall good offices. But alaſſe, as the ſcantneſſe of our Capacity in this kind, ſo the Ignorance of the *more inward cauſes* of ſo many miſeries, and chiefly *the Perplex and dangerous Nature of the Matters now in Agitation among you*: All theſe put together, ſtrike us quite Dumbe; we are as men wholly at a ſtand able onely (in a kind of Silent Aſtonishment or holy horrour) to admire, and to adore *that Finger of God*, which is now lifted up over you all.

But ſince, being by you ſo lovingly invited to it, we muſt needs at laſt breake off our ſilence, we are reduced to an extraordinary *Suſpence both of Mindes and of Pens*, what to ſay firſt or laſt, or indeed what to ſay at all.

And now in the end, after long deliberation, leaſt, as *Iobs* friends, we ſhould tranſgreſſe by precipitate or unſeaſonable diſcourſe: Behold our Hearts and Mouthes top-full of the Sences and Expreſſiõs of our hearty Commiſeration, our Eyes running down with Teares of Compaſſion, our Breaſts even ſwolne up with Sighes and Groanes at your Calamities. Theſe are they, God is our Witneſſe, that fill up the greateſt part of our private Prayers, of our publike Devotions, Faſtings, and Humiliations: In all which we are reſolved to give *the Father of Mercies* no reſt, untill your Tranquillity being once more ordained in Heaven, God doe *extend Peace* upon Earth unto you all like a *River*, and the fulneſſe of his *Bleſſing*, like an ever-flowing *Streame*.

Our affaires, yea, the generall Intereſt of all the Reformed Churches are ſo cloſely involved in yours, and ſo mutually depending theron, That your

your ſafety once procured aſſured us all of our own good Eſtates. Therfore eſpecially during this grievous Tempeſt; which may ſeem to bring about again the *heavy time of the Saints great Primitive Tribulation*, we are, in a manner, compelled with trembling Hearts and Lipps, to powre out our Lamentations into the Eares of our moſt gracious & Heavenly Father, no longer now onely preparing to *contend by Fire*, as he once revealed it in a *Viſion* to his Prophet *b Amos*, but already for a long time really *contending by Fire* indeed: And how then can we forbeare from crying out, *O Lord forgive, ceaſe we beſeech thee, by whom ſhall* Iacob *ariſe, for he is* ſmall, *and round about all in a flame, by the fire of thy burning Indignation?* From this our owne *Watch-Tower*, untoucht as yet by Divine miracle: We have beheld this furious Conflagration ſpreading it ſelfe all over; We have ſeen the *Griſoen-Italian Churches* utterly defaced, The Goſpell in *Bohemia* its ancient Seat, wholly extirpated: The *Palatinate* devoured; The *French Churches*, deprived of all humane ſupports, and refuges, like ſo many poore little Callow Birds, alive indeed, but only during pleaſure: The *German Churches* almoſt all overshakē, yea, more then halfe deſtroyed; your own *Ireland* ſwallowed up with an unexpected deluge of *Aſſaſſines* and *Robbers*; One onely thing was wanting to that huge heape of publike calamity, Namely, that flourishing *England, the very Eye and excellency of all the Churches, Chriſts own choyce, purchaſe, and peculiar*; *The Sanctuary of the afflicted, the Arcenall of the faint-hearted, the Magazine of the Needy, that Royall Standard of good hope*, c ſhould by ſo unlookt for

b Amos 7. 4. 5.

c This is a very large

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an Accident, without any externall enemy, or Forrain Impreſſion, become in a manner, its own *Felo de ſe*, and make an end of it ſelfe with its own cruell hands. What a ſad Spectacle is this to ſee that Church thus trodden under foot? To ſee that glorious Fould of our Lord thus ranſanckt; yea worried, not by the wilde Beaſts of the Forreſt, not torne in peeces by the Mercileſſe Pawes of the Lion, or of the Wolfe, but utterly diſmembred by its own unnaturall Sheep inraged and exaſperated one againſt another: An horred example this, and till now never heard of among the reformed churches! It ſeems heretofore like Chriſts own true sheep, they were kept tame by the Feare of God, united by the ſame bond of Faith, knit together by the Apprehenſion of the common enemy, and ſo long they did both expreſſe and exerciſe holily and faithfully their mutuall Charity, quiet, and unity among themſelves; in all which, they preſerved themſelves from the Rage of the Wolfe by the Chriſtian ſimplicity of their own good Conditions, by the Innocency of their pious lives, by the Sanctity of their Religion, by the Conſtant undauntedneſſe of their holy Faith. *But now We are wholly ſtruck with horrour at the Change of that ſo glorious Face* d *of your Church*, whileſt we heare at this Diſtance the loud report of thoſe deadly Warrs that are now flaming up betwixt the King and his people: to ſee at Daggers drawing indeed Brethren againſt Brethren, Parents againſt their own Children. Chriſts Sheep puſhing againſt and goaring their own Fellowes: nay, their owne Shepheards: At all this we are utter

Teſtimony of the flouriſhing Eſtate of the church of England as it ſtood under its Epiſcopall Government.

d Still that was under Epiſcopacy.

utterly amazed, and *would ſcarce have beleeved, that in the ſelfe ſame pitched Field, one and the ſame God and Father, in the name of one and the ſame Mediator, at one and the ſame time, could be invocated for help on both ſides, to ſhedd the blood of thoſe, that for the Major-part* had hitherto by ſo many cleare Demonſtrations in the whole equall courſe of their lives, equall in their *Piety* towards God, equall in their love and *Loyalty* towards their Country, approved themſelves ſuch faithfull and true Brethren one to another. Strange, That theſe ſhould now againſt their own Bowells turn all their warlike power, far better if imployed in the juſt punishments of their own treacherous Neighbours, or towards the reliefe of their deareſt Brethren, ſo long bowing the back under the weight of their bondage, and even at the laſt gaſpe for help.

What marvaile then, if theſe your cruell diſtractions have awakened, yea, divided even to a variety the judgements and affections too of Chriſtendome? Neither do we ourſelves deny but that for a while we did ſomewhat ſtagger at, and as it were fluctuate about it; yet that demurre of ours did neither proceed from prejudice againſt, nor from partiality towards either ſide, as not being called upon by either, neither publikely nor privately, till now of late in your reference unto us, which we do reckon as no ſmall piece of Honour, ſince in your eſteem our Iudgement may ſeem of ſo much Weight, as able to advance or ballance down either party, both being of ſuch extraordinary quality.

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We have conteined our ſelves within the bounds of a conſcionable judgement, and impartiall charity, towards both Parties, for indeed yee are both Brethren; We have neither way exceeded the compaſſe of our own meaſure but ſtill kept a meane, as rejoycing on the one hand at thoſe good things which we did heare were entertained with the generall applauſe of all good men; So on the other hand, we could not but behold with griefe thoſe other *Sinister paſſages* that in themſelves did carry a more fatall appearance. We were *overjoyed* at the *e* Iſſue of the *Scottish troubles*, that ſeemed at firſt to preſage a combuſtion not unlike this of yours. and yet far ſooner quenched, for (as by Gods own admirable handi-worke, So by *the never-enough-magnified of your moſt gracious King*, and by the Concord of that wary Nation) that fire was in time put out, or ever it did burſt into a more open flame. At the firſt report of theſe your own Commotions, our mindes were poſſeſſed with a good hope that all paſt offences might with the ſame promptitude and facility be forthwith repaired, and all matters compoſed: So that what Actions or Counſells should appeare amiſſe, might by the *Benignity of the beſt of Princes* be eaſily redreſſed, and conſequently both Church and Commonwealth without noiſe or bloodshed be kept in due order: In purſuance of all which we could not but *admire* the happy and glorious beginnings of the Parliament, and *the more then Fatherly affection* of His moſt gracious Majeſty, evidenced by his enacting thoſe Lawes, from which for the time to come, there was a cleare hope of a

e Without Battell or Bloud-ſhed.

Government full of equity, and freed from all corruption: *An example not so rare, as indeed singular in this our wild Generation, so fertile of violent Power and Princes.* But all these our goodly hopes were soone blasted by *that Raging Storme and Tempest of popular Tumults among you, that did force away both your most gracious Prince from His Parliament, as also a great part of the Parliament from it selfe. Since which we have heard indeed of many attempts and enterprises, many Propositions and Projects, but all of them come to nothing, nothing is yet brought to perfection, nothing is yet rightly setled or established.*

The businesse of the Church might seem the chiefe Object of your care and Sollicitude: If it had been handled and debated at times, and with minds calme and quiet, had the opposite judgements been compared and impartially weighed one with another, such an orderly course might happily have purchased a lasting Peace to your Kingdom, and also rendred unto your Church *that most desired Primitive face of the Apostolicall times:* [a] but behold how quite contrary the Event hath fallen out? for the minds of both sides being averse from, yea, violently bent one against another, this very matter hath proved the great Rock of offence by exasperating

a Such was Episcopacy in its first Apostolicall vigour of discipline and Government, the which as at the Synode of Dort, this very man did both acknowledge unto Bishop Carleton to be the best Forme of Church Government, and also did heartily wish for it in his own Church; so doth he sufficiently commend the happy effects of it above pag. 6. in that full passage of his conteining the Superlative Praises of the former flourishing Estate of the Church of England, as before these Troubles it stood under Episcopacy: The Restauration of which former good Estate, is againe by this Authour at the latter end of this Epistle, pag. 15. earnestly wished and prayed for.

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the wound and tearing it wider and wider, by diſtracting more and more aſſunder the hearts of each party, diſtempered enough already through former partiality and diſcord of affections. Nay if the report be true, *theſe Church Diſtractions have opened a wide gap to ſo many boyſterous and private ſpirits, which we heare have aſſumed to themſelves the moſt miſchievous Title of Independents*, then which *Deſtructive* Sect nothing could more undermine, yea, quite overturne the very foundation of the Church.

Beſides all that, We have been extreamely grieved at this, That the *Spirit of Diviſion* hath ſo plentifully ſowne among you his pernicious *Tares* of *Feares and Iealouſies*, that they have not onely fructified, but even overgrown all over all manner of *Mutuall Truſt*, in deſpight of ſo many *Royall Proteſtations ſealed* and bound up with ſo many moſt *grievous Imprecations*, But *the very top* and *height* of all our Sorrowes on your behalfes, hath been this, That all that curſed fuell thus heaped on, is now at laſt kindled into *a bloudy War*, lengthened on both ſides, by a Multiplication *of deadly feudes*: So that during ſuch an Vniverſall Combuſtion, *what ever meens bare words, and never ſo frequent Proteſtations otherwiſe may pretend yet the Royall Honour, Power and Dignity cannot but fall into utter contempt: and on the contrary, the licentiouſneſſe of the moſt audacious and lawleſſe cannot but gather Strength, and outgrow the other*: and then, conſequently Piety muſt needs decay, mutuall Love and Charity muſt utterly vanish away, and in ſtead thereof *a kinde of Savage Diſpoſition*, yea brutish Rage *muſt needs invade at laſt the Mindes and Manners of the*

Men of this Generation, who in processe of time will no longer looke upon the old Originall Causes that began the War, but rather upon the new mutuall Injuries freshly done, or received in the very Progresse or Prosecution of the Warr between two Parties divided far more by an odious difference of Reproachfull Names, as it were, Infamous brands fixed upon each other, then really by the Cause it selfe. It had been far more easie unto us, and all good men else, to deliver our Iudgements upon your Case; had *the Major part* of either side differed from the other, either in the more Essentiall points of Religion, or else dissented about the Fundamentall Lawes of the Commonwealth; or had either Party been oppressed [b] by the other in a direct way of open Persecution, or had there been an Introduction of Publike Tyranny against the Laws through the baseness and pusillanimity of the other Party: But as for you, you have abundant cause of Comfort or Security against all these evills [c] since by vertue of your own most just and powerfull Laws, *those Laws that already have bin indifferently agreed upon by the generall consent of all Parties concerned*, you may with ease prevent, or cut off all those forementioned evills, which in other Kingdoms may seem almost unavoydable: All these considerations put together, have moved us for a long while seriously to deliberate and advise what might be at last, the best expedient left to procure *an honest and sure Peace* among you. Indeed we have been much *Scandalized*, that *all the Mediations* of

[b] Woe be to them that first began that Warr whose Nonnecessity, yea Injustice, strangers themselves can so far off so plainly perceive and condemne too.

[c] To wit, in a faire, quiet, Legall Parliamentary, way, not in a Martiall way: therefore he mentions not at all the power of Armes, but only the Power of the Laws.

severall

ſeverall Kingdoms and Provinces in League with you, have been tried and uſed all in vaine: Howbeit it came into our mind to propound this *one Medium more*, whether now at laſt there be yet any hope to obtain from the *King*, moſt gracious Majeſty, and from the *Parliament*, that of both ſides *Eccleſiaſticall Perſons* may be choſen of unqueſtioned Truſt, and Fame-proofe beyond all ſuſpition, to whom this great buſineſſe may be committed, Namely, that Comparing the chiefe points now in controverſie, they may Chalke out ſome good way towards *an holy Peace*. But firſt theſe *Men* muſt by Gods good Spirit, themſelves be *diſpoſeſſed of all Factious Inclinations*, that ſo they may become fit *Vmpires and Truſtees* of the Publike Peace, and impartiall *Ambaſſadours of Reconciliation* between both Parties, and alſo able and Studious too by all their Speeches, Exhortations, and Sacred Obteſtations, to charme the Hearts that on both ſides are ſo obdurate in Warr and Bloudſhed. This were the ready way, by thus interpoſing the *Sacred Cenſer* in the very middeſt of theſe Publike flames to quench all the heart-burnings: for who knows whether, at the devout Prayers and holy groanes of Perſons Sacred, thus proſtrate at the foot-ſtoole of the Heavenly grace, the Divine power and glory may not break out once more, and ſhew forth it ſelfe by moving the hearts of both Parties to lay downe all hatred, and publike enmities. The onely way to procure ſuch ſound Counſell of both ſides, and to purchaſe again the precious bleſſing of a generall Peace, is, eſpecially when all humane helps faile, to call in the Divine

vine Assistance, which no man did ever try in vaine. By these good means that may be brought to passe (what cannot be hoped for from Civill Warr, how ever the successe prove) that by a voluntary Inclination of Mindes, the wound shall be so fully closed up, as that Love and Charity may in time perfectly be recovered.

The good opinion which you have conceived of us may suffer us to offer these Considerations unto you. It might be immodesty in us to prescribe, or to advise you any further: But no Law of Modesty can ever forbid us to wish, and to Vow, and to beseech God for you, yea to appeale unto God and to adjure you all in his Name.

O then above all, take *a speedy and speciall care for a sure and sound Peace*, what ever it be d 'tis to be preferred before any Civill Broyles. Beware least *the Fortune of Warr* Smiling upon you, draw you on, and tempt you to commit your great Affaires to the Ambigious Chance of Victory, then which nothing can happen more deadly, yea pernicious unto the Commonwealth. *Roule away that huge Scandall that lyes so heavie upon the Whole Christian World, yea Wash and Wipe off that foule stain of black oppression, charged especially upon the purest Profession of the Gospell, as if still it did in a kind of Antipathy, or secret Hatred oppose and oppugne all Kingly Power, and Supreme Authority, Mittigate and asswage the exulcerated, and too too much provoked mind of your King, and doe not compell Him* e TO PINACLES AND PRECIPICES.

d What would this Peace-maker have said if he had seen or heard of so many Royall reiterated offers of peace wher with the Soveraigne hath and still doth woe his Stiff-necked Subjects. Certainely, the more peaceable side hath alwaies amongst good men had the Reputation of the better side.

e This was very good Counsell from a Stranger, had the Subjects had the grace to follow it in time then had there been an end of the old Warr, and a happy Prevention of a new Warr, which except stopt by timely

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Rather beare with ſome Blemiſhes and Corruptions, from which no Empire could yet wholly be free, no not in its moſt flouriſhing Eſtate. Account not thoſe *Remedies the beſt*, that are *abruptly applied and accumulated* but thoſe rather that being *taken in by degrees*, may in time, by little and little, goe down more eaſily, and digeſt the better, and ſo at laſt obtaine a Confirmation. And laſt of all, by the Bowells and mercy of Chriſt, ſuffer your ſelves to be intreated, that we may no longer ſee that Wealth, Power and Strengh which God hath graciouſly beſtowed upon you, imployed, yea, utterly waſted in the *fatall Ruine* of your owne ſelves, but rather let it be ſtretched out to the Reliefe, and ſupport of ſo many of your own moſt afflicted † Brethren, even panting after your owne Peace.

ſubmiſſion can portend nothing but the utter Nationall Ruine of Church and State, which God in mercy avert.

† Of Ireland.

May *the God of Peace* himſelfe heare, accept, and grant theſe our ſincere Devotions; May God defeat all the Plots, and diſappoint all the Machinations of the Devill, and of Antichriſt. May the ſame God reſtore your Kingdom, and your Churches, *to that High State and pitch of Holineſſe and of Glory, in which, on the Theater of the Vniverſall Church, they have hitherto excelled and outſhined all the Churches upon Earth.*

‡ This full Teſtimony of the Excellent State of the Church of England (ſtill as it heretofore ſtood under Epiſcopacy) out-ſpeakes all the former, and to this good Ejaculation from Genevah, no right Proteſtant-Malignant but will heartily ſay, Amen.

As for us, take in good part this our plain Sence delivered freely unto you in a Brotherly Confidence, and Pardon and Impute our Delay of Anſwer unto theſe weighty Reaſons. The Report was here very Strong, That you were now very faire for *a Treaty*

of Peace;

of Peace: Therefore we thought it fit to expect *what a Day might bring forth*, that so all our Words and all our Affections too might overflow with meere Gratulations and full Expressions of our Ioyes. But sorry we are, that we have yet again been deceived with vain hopes: And now, that we may speedily recover and enjoy that Happinesse, we both wish and pray, with as much Devotion as becoms your Dearest Brethren, (who glory not a little in your good esteeme of us) That God will powre down upon you his richest Benedictions, together with a large Measure of his Wisedome, and Spirituall Strength. Farewell, and *prosper in the Lord*.

FINIS.